

VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Exciting NEW resource on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Treatments from the Virginia Commission on Youth:

In recognition of May as National Mental Health Month, the Commission on Youth announces a new effort to increase awareness of children's mental health issues. "With the increase in attention given to children's mental health and the development of treatments for children with serious emotional disorders, mental health is emerging as a new focus in the field of early childhood development" stated Delegate Phillip Hamilton, Chairman of the Commission on Youth. "Family members, practitioners, and researchers are becoming increasingly aware that mental health services are an important and necessary service for young children who experience mental, emotional, or behavioral challenges."

In 2002, the General Assembly directed the Commission on Youth to coordinate the collection of evidence-based treatment practices recognized as effective for the treatment of children with mental health disorders. Advisory groups of mental health experts were established to assist in the effort. This resource, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Treatments, was published in late 2002 and posted on the Commission on Youth website. It can be accessed at coy.state.va.us. The link is: <http://coy.state.va.us/Modalities/contents.htm>.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Treatments is tailored for parents, caregivers, educators, service providers and others seeking current research on evidence-based treatments. The Collection includes sections on:

mental retardation
pervasive developmental disorder
behavior disorder
maladaptive behaviors
tourette's disorder
anxiety disorders
mood disorders

schizophrenia
substance abuse and mental illness
youth suicide
school-based services
juvenile offenders
helpful resources (example: frequently used terms)

To ensure that this information gets to its intended audience, the 2003 General Assembly passed Senate Joint Resolution 358, patroned by Senator Edward Houck. This legislation requires the Commission to disseminate Child and Adolescent Mental Health Treatments. Executive branch agencies, local agencies, health organizations, health providers and advocacy groups are partnering with the Commission in this effort so that as many individuals as is possible across the Commonwealth can access this resource. "Dissemination of this resource is important in promoting the use of evidence-based treatments and ensuring that children receive the appropriate treatment," stated Amy Atkinson, Executive Director for the Virginia Commission on Youth.

The Commission on Youth will be recognizing their partners in this effort and officially launching the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Treatments webpage on May 19th. A reception and press conference are scheduled for 12 noon and partners will be recognized at the Commission meeting immediately following at 1:00 p.m. Both will be held in the General Assembly Building, House Room C.

STATEMENTS MADE ON CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENTS:

Every day that we do this work, we are tasked to deliver services and supports that help children and families move toward independence and self-sufficiency. Direct practitioners, administrators, policy makers, advocates, researchers and family members must have the ability to identify and utilize effective treatment for children and their families. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Treatments offers a clear and concise document for all of us to use as a guide to delivering treatment services that are effective across a broad spectrum of mental health issues. I am using it as both a training tool and direct practice guide. It is well received by all who have been introduced to the document and I look forward to its broad dissemination in the coming months. Thanks to all of those involved in the development of this important document.

Michael Terkeltaub, M.A., CCFC

Director of Program Development at Alternative Behavioral Services a private agency providing the full spectrum of mental health and social services for children and families . Service provider to children and their families for 25 years and direct services practitioner and administrator in Virginia for past 15 years.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Treatments pulls together current information on treatments and compiles it into a very accessible, non-technical and user friendly format. It is designed to equip parents, teachers, family members, policy makers, others and even professionals with contemporary knowledge about effective mental health services. Treatment works. Our future depends on the children of today. Mentally healthy children are likely to grow up to be mentally healthy adults and citizens.

Anita Everett, M.D.
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